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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5285th meeting of the Security Council, held on 18 October 2005, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The question concerning Haiti: Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2005/631)", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés.

"The Security Council stresses the primary importance of ensuring that Haiti benefits from transparent, inclusive, free and fair elections, in accordance with international democratic standards and open to all political candidates that have renounced violence, thereby enabling legitimate leadership at the national and local levels. The Council conveys its concern regarding the risk of delays in the electoral process, and underlines international expectations that the first round of national elections should take place in 2005, and all efforts should be undertaken so that the democratically elected authorities take office on 7 February 2006 in accordance with the Haitian Constitution. The Council notes, with appreciation, that, so far, more than three million people have been registered. The Council praises the Organization of American States (OAS) and other relevant international stakeholders for their contribution to that process. The Council welcomes the representation of a broad range of Haitian political opinion in the electoral process and underlines the importance of a collaborative approach by political leaders. National reconciliation and political dialogue should continue to be promoted as a means to ensure long-term stability and good governance.

"The Security Council notes with concern that important challenges to the preparations of the elections remain yet to be overcome. While welcoming the recent steps taken by the Transitional Government and the 'Conseil Electoral Provisoire' (CEP), the Council urges them to perform the ten urgent tasks required to ensure that elections will take place this year, which were endorsed by the Transitional Government on 17 September 2005 and reiterated by the 'Core Group' on 18 October 2005. The Council calls for effective and prompt decision-making in key areas by the relevant Haitian authorities, and urges the Haitian authorities to make full use of MINUSTAH's advice and assistance in the organization of elections. The Council calls upon them to

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work with MINUSTAH to develop a phased electoral plan as a matter of priority, with a view to finalizing a feasible electoral calendar. The Council also urges the Haitian authorities to publish swiftly the final list of candidates for the elections, and to agree in consultation with MINUSTAH upon a list of voting centres that ensures voter access and takes into account budgetary, security and logistical implications.

"The Security Council strongly supports the mission's endeavours to ensure a secure and stable environment in Haiti, which is crucial for the country's progress, and to enable the electoral process to take place. The Council recognizes MINUSTAH's contribution to the restoration and maintenance of the rule of law in the country, and underlines the need for strong and coordinated assistance to enable the reform and restructuring of Haiti's rule of law institutions. To this end, the Council urges the Transitional Government, working with MINUSTAH, to put into effect the initiatives called for in Resolution 1608 (2005) concerning the Haitian National Police (HNP) reform and restructuring plan as well as the reform of the Judicial System, in order to end impunity and ensure the due process. The Council welcomes the improvements in the security situation, due to the resolve of MINUSTAH to act in support of the Transitional Government. The Council expresses concern regarding reports of involvement of some officers of the HNP in serious crimes and human rights violations and stresses the need to investigate fully any allegations of serious crimes and human rights violations. The Council welcomes the deployment of MINUSTAH's additional military and police personnel, in accordance with Resolution 1608 (2005), and expresses gratitude to troop- and police-contributing countries.

"The Security Council reiterates the need for the Transitional Government and MINUSTAH to begin immediately effective implementation of a DDR programme. The Council stresses the need to implement high visibility quick-impact projects that create jobs. The Council also recognizes the need of maintaining stability in the period immediately following the elections, including through continued international presence, and to ensure that key Haitian institutions can function adequately, especially those institutions addressing rule of law and development. The Council recognizes the importance of the upcoming Donor Conference to be held in Brussels on 20 and 21 October, and calls upon donors to continue to disburse the pledged funds. The Council recognizes further that this Conference constitutes an important opportunity to further elaborate on short, medium and long term strategies, within a unified framework, to ensure coordination and continuity in a coherent and well prioritized response to Haitian problems. Haiti is at a critical juncture. While ultimately the responsibility for Haiti's future lies with its Government and people, the international community must continue to provide support."